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HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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DATE: October 21, 2008
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COUNTY EXECUTIVE CRAIG FUNDS FLUMIST PROGRAM

(Bel Air, MD - October 21, 2008) - Harford County Executive David R. Craig, joined by Superintendent of Schools Dr. Jacqueline C. Haas and the Acting Health Officer for the Harford County Health Department Susan Kelly, today kicked-off the start of the FluMist vaccination program in Harford County Public Schools. The kick-off of the FluMist vaccination was held at

Churchville Elementary School.

"In keeping with our commitment to enhance quality of living and support for public education, we are pleased to provide \$150,000 to the Harford County Health Department to support the FluMist Program for the Harford County Public Schools," County Executive David R. Craig stated. "Helping to keep our children healthy during the cold and flu season is essential for their well being and their education," the county executive remarked.

The funding, \$100,000 in general funds and an additional \$50,000 grant from Harford County, will support the Harford County Health Department in providing vaccine for the elementary student population of Harford County Public Schools.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) the best way to prevent getting the flu is by getting a flu vaccination each year. On average, 5% to 20% of the U. S. population gets the flu each year. Additionally, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized and more than 36,000 die each year as a result of complications from the flu.

Common symptoms of the flu include fever, sore throat, aches and pains, runny or stuffy nose, dizziness, tiredness, and coughing. Complications from the flu can include bacterial pneumonia, ear infections, sinus infections, dehydration, and worsen chronic health conditions such as congestive heart failure, asthma or diabetes.

Recently, the Harford County Public Schools and the Harford County Health Department were recognized by the Maryland State School Health Council for the development and implementation of the Maryland Elementary School Influenza Project for Harford County. The award recognized the efforts of the Harford County Health Department and HCPS to provide FluMist vaccines to every elementary school student in Harford County. Funding for the program was provided by Harford County Government.

Last year, 8,944 students were vaccinated against influenza in 48 hours. This effort was repeated six weeks later for 4,000 students who required a second dose.

The FluMist vaccination process for elementary public school children in Harford County begins on Tuesday, October 21, 2008 and will conclude in early December with a second dose for students that require it. More than a dozen Harford County Health Department nurses will administer the FluMist vaccination, assisted by school nurses.

Each dose of the FluMist vaccination costs \$17.75.